

## Spiritual Gifts

**Spiritual gifts** (or [charismata](#)), according to [Christianity](#), are gifts that are bestowed on Christians, each having his or her own proper gift (or gifts) to strengthen the [Church](#). They are described in the [New Testament](#), primarily in [1 Corinthians 12](#), [Romans 12](#), and [Ephesians 4](#).

Some believe their operation was limited to [early Christianity](#). According to some [Protestant denominations](#) gifts like [speaking in tongues](#) and [interpretation of tongues](#) were enjoyed only for a short time and were suited to the Church's infancy, not to later times. This view is known as [cessationism](#). This opinion is held by [John F. MacArthur, Jr.](#), Robert L. Thomas and many other conservative [mainline Protestants](#). Some Christian teachers such as [Zola Levitt](#) have maintained that the number of gifts cannot be determined.

Other groups, including [Pentecostals](#), and other [Holiness](#) denominations of [Christianity](#), take an opposing view, believing that the Spiritual gifts are still given by the [Holy Spirit](#) today, and Pentecostal meetings often involve ordinary parishioners displaying the use of these gifts (1 Cor 14). In addition, [Catholic charismatics](#), [Eastern Orthodoxy](#), and many other Protestant denominations also continue to believe in and make use of Spiritual gifts.

Yet others believe that the lists of gifts found in Scripture are representative, not exhaustive. They maintain that any talent or ability that the Holy Spirit uses for the good of the Church is a Spiritual gift.

Emphasis on teaching about the nine gifts of the Spirit originated from [Howard Carter](#), an early Pentecostal evangelist. This is based on the text from 1 Corinthians 12:27-30 giving the gifts and listing them as the "gifts of the Spirit." They were later taught and popularized by [Lester Sumrall](#), who accompanied Carter on many missionary journeys in his youth. Modern Bible teachers and scholars have come to the conclusion that there are other gifts of the Spirit listed in Scripture, as seen in the chart below.

The Gifts of The Spirit is not to be confused with the Fruit of the Spirit.

### **Fruit of the Spirit - Visible Growth in Jesus Christ**

"Fruit of the Spirit" is a biblical term that sums up the nine visible attributes of a true Christian life. Using the King James Version of Galatians 5:22-23, these attributes are: **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance**. We learn from scripture that these are not individual "fruits" from which we pick and choose. Rather, the fruit of the Spirit is one nine fold "fruit" that characterizes all who truly walk in the Holy Spirit. Collectively, these are the fruits that all Christians should be producing in their new lives with Jesus Christ.

### ***A list based on 1 Corinthians (12:4-6)***

These three verses in I Corinthians 12 seem to suggest that what is commonly termed as "Spiritual Gifts" could also be described as "The Trinity Gifts" or "Gifts from the Godhead" although these terms are not specifically used in the Bible. However a closer look at each one of the 3 verses will show that there are three distinct categories identified as Gifts, Operations, Administrations and Manifestation that are given by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This distinction is important as each set of Gifts are different in their usage, purpose and origin.

Other Gifts ☐	The 5-Fold Ministry ☐	The 9-Spiritual Gifts ☐
Romans 12:6-8 ☐	Ephesians 4:11 ☐	1-Corinthians 12:1-14 ☐
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• → Prophecy ¶</li> <li>• → Ministry ¶</li> <li>• → Teaching ¶</li> <li>• → Exhortation ¶</li> <li>• → Giving ¶</li> <li>• → Leading ¶</li> <li>• → Showing mercy (compassion) ☐</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• → Apostolic ¶</li> <li>• → Prophetic ¶</li> <li>• → Evangelical ¶</li> <li>• → Pastoral ¶</li> <li>• → Teaching ☐</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• → Wisdom ¶</li> <li>• → Knowledge ¶</li> <li>• → Discerning various spirits ¶</li> <li>• → Speaking in tongues ¶</li> <li>• → Interpretation of tongues ¶</li> <li>• → Prophecy ¶</li> <li>• → Faith ¶</li> <li>• → Working of miracles ¶</li> <li>• → Healing ☐</li> </ul>

Certain individuals hold that the short list of Spiritual gifts identified in I Cor 12:27-30 is a list drawn from the top three and is more a summary as Paul's discourse concludes and he speaks in general terms to all Christians who share in the variety of the three sets of Gifts.

## List of Spiritual gifts

There are various opinions as to the number of Spiritual gifts. There are also different ways of categorizing the gifts proposed.

Many items appearing as Spiritual gifts are also required by the Bible of all Christians, such as faith, prayer, evangelism and so on. One explanation is that the Spiritual gift of Faith means faith despite the circumstances, or a particularly strong faith in God. The Spiritual gift of Prayer could mean a supernatural confidence in prayer, or a special ability to pray. All believers are encouraged to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with other people, but the gift of Evangelism could mean a particular gift to reach others.

## Charismatic gifts (1 Corinthians 12)

Also known as the "manifestation gifts" or "miraculous gifts." Some limit the term "Spiritual gifts" to just the so-called charismatic gifts. [Cessationism](#) claims that these Spiritual gifts eventually ceased to operate (through individuals) early in Christian history. Its counterpart [continuationism](#) claims that they still operate today. They are believed by some to be transmitted through the [laying on of hands](#).

- [word of wisdom](#) / message of wisdom, 1 Cor 12:8
- [word of knowledge](#) / message of knowledge, 1 Cor 12:8
- [faith](#), 1 Cor 12:9
- [gifts of healing](#), 1 Cor 12:9, 12:28
- [miracles](#) / [miraculous powers](#), 1 Cor 12:10, 12:28
- [prophecy](#) / prophesying / prophets, 1 Cor 12:10, 1 Cor 12:28, Rom 12:6, Eph 4:11
- [discernment of spirits](#) / distinguishing of spirits, 1 Cor 12:10
- [speaking in tongues](#) / varieties of tongues / speaking in different known languages (unknown to the speaker), 1 Cor 12:10

- [interpretation of tongues](#), 1 Cor 12:10

"Speaking in tongues" and "interpretation of tongues" are sometimes viewed as one Spiritual gift, "tongues." The TNIV footnote has "languages" as a possible translation for "tongues," since this is clearly (based on the Acts 2 event) what the word refers to. Also, the nine gifts in 1 Cor 12 are sometimes divided into three categories, "gifts of knowledge" (wisdom, knowledge, discernment), "gifts of speech" (tongues, interpretation, prophecy), and "gifts of power" (faith, healing, miracles).

## Other commonly listed Spiritual gifts

- apostles, 1 Cor 12:28, Eph 4:11. Some believe that the gift of apostleship was for the First Century Apostles (Christian leaders/disciples) only.<sup>[2]</sup>
- teachers / teaching, 1 Cor 12:28, Rom 12:7, Eph 4:11
- helps / helping, 1 Cor 12:28
- administrations / guidance, 1 Cor 12:28
- ministry / serving, Rom 12:7
- encouragement / exhortation, Rom 12:8
- giving, Rom 12:8
- leading, Rom 12:8
- showing mercy, Rom 12:8
- evangelists, Eph 4:11
- pastors, Eph 4:11
- teachers Eph 4:11. Some take "pastors and teachers" to be combined.

## Other Spiritual gifts

There is less consensus about other gifts not specifically mentioned in the usual lists of gifts, but that nonetheless seem to be hinted at in Scripture. Some are found in the New Testament such as:

- [celibacy](#) (I Corinthians 7:7)<sup>[3]</sup>
- [marriage](#) (I Corinthians 7:7) and
- (voluntary) [poverty](#)

Others are found in the Old Testament such as:

- craftsmanship
- worship (gift of music)
- interpretation of dreams (e.g. Joseph and Daniel)

Gifts of the Holy Spirit are clearly distinguished from the [fruit of the Spirit](#) (Galatians 5:22). Jesus predicted the occurrence of false gifts, particularly in the end time (Matthew 24:24, 7:22,23)

Gifts of the Holy Spirit are listed in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12,13 & 14, and Ephesians 4.

**Apostle:** One sent by God with a holy mission to fulfill; and the strong powers and Spiritual gifts to fulfill the mission -- (known by the fruit of the Spirit overflowing). Apostolic ministry involves laying foundation(s). In the case of Paul and Barnabas, we see this expressed in 'Church planting' by preaching the Gospel in new areas. Apostles in Scripture worked in teams. An apostolic team shared a

'measure of rule' in churches started through their ministry in regions where they are the first to proclaim the Gospel of Christ. (II Corinthians 10.)

**Prophet:** One who speaks, or communicates a message, authoritatively, as moved by the Holy Spirit Himself -- (known by their good fruit). They are also known to see visions of the past present or future at God's discretion for his glory or to teach.

**Evangelist:** Someone who desires that all should come to know the truth that God loves everyone so much that He sent His Son Jesus Christ to live a perfect life, die, and rise again for their redemption. Someone can be gifted to proclaim this message in too many forms to count. Whatever can be used to glorify God can be used as a gift (in other words those that are craftsmen can be evangelists just as easily as a singer).

**Pastor:** A word that means 'shepherd.' Pastors are gifted to lead, guide, and set an example for other Christians.

**Teacher:** Someone able to understand the more difficult things of God and explain them in a way that is easy to understand and live by in daily life.

**Service:** The God-given ability to do for others whatever needs to be done. Divine ability to carry the burdens or tasks of others without seeking notice or earthly reward.

**Exhortation:** the ability to motivate Christians to do the works of Christ.

**Giving:** being blessed by God with resources or time and being able to give them where and when they are needed with a cheerful heart.

**Leadership:** God-given insight into when something needs to be done, who can do it, how it can be completed, and how to lead those people to get it accomplished. Those that have this tend to have a draw about them that attracts others into watching what they do.

**Mercy:** A heart to care for and encourage those who are not able to care for themselves and whom no one else would care for. Knowing who to help and when to help.

**Word of wisdom:** A message, concept, or bit of wisdom that God reveals supernaturally to the recipient. It may or may not be shared with others.

**Word of knowledge:** A message, concept, or bit of knowledge that God reveals supernaturally to the recipient. It may or may not be shared with others. People with this tend to be able to understand scripture in a way that others simply cannot.

**Tongues:** A gift from God and the ability to speak another language not known by the believer speaking it.

**Interpretation of tongues:** The God-given ability to make tongues a clear message to all who are present to edify, exhort and comfort the Body of Christ.

**Prophecy:** The God-given ability to receive a message from God to edify, exhort and comfort the Body of Christ or a believer. To speak the Truth as moved by the Holy Spirit. Most prophesying statements do not contain predictions about the future.

**Working of miracles:** The ability to perform supernatural acts by God by the Holy Spirit.

**Gifts of healing:** The God-given ability to bring or release healing to a person in their body, emotions, or soul.

**Ability to distinguish between spirits:** The God-given ability to know what is from God and what is not from Him. The Divine ability to see evil spirits or influence and bring God's power (Jesus' blood) and God's love (Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection) in its place in an easier way than those that cannot. People with this ability are also known to be able to tell truth from lie, as well as see God's power in people and places.

**Faith:** Knowing what you hope for, having a conviction about things you cannot see, trusting God, believing God's Word, and obeying Him. (Hebrews 11) People with this tend to have an unshakable faith in God, they may doubt themselves but they never doubt God.

## Conclusion

The gift of Prophecy may just be the greatest of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The reason I say this is because the apostle Paul purposely singles out this gift when telling us to seek after the spiritual gifts.

Paul says to “**desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.**” With him purposely singling out the gift of prophecy in comparison to the rest of the gifts in this verse, I believe that this may be to tell us that the gift of prophecy may be the greatest of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. And when you think about exactly what this gift is all about, I believe that he may be right on the money.

The gift of prophecy is when you get a direct Word from the Lord to usually give to someone else. And when I say a direct word, I mean the message from the Lord that will be given to you will literally be word for word. When you get one of these, you need to try and either write or type all of it out if you are in a place to be able to do so.

The gift of Miracles from the Holy Spirit is where you can get into some real heavy, jaw-dropping, knock-your-socks off type of supernatural activity from Him.

Some of the different Bible Dictionaries describe the word miracle as the following:

- **An intervention in the natural universe by God**
- **A phenomena that transcends natural laws**
- **A divine act by which God reveals Himself to people**

Good examples of actual miracles from the Bible are the following:

- **Jesus and the apostles healing and casting demons out of people.**
- **Jesus turning water into wine at the wedding of Cana.**
- **Jesus feeding 5000 people by multiplying 5 loaves of bread and two fish.**
- **God parting the Red Sea for Moses and the children of Israel.**
- **Daniel not being eaten by the lions in the lion's den.**
- **Peter walking on water.**

Just stop and think about what all of these gifts from the Holy Spirit are all really about. We are talking about God Almighty Himself coming down and manifesting a part of Himself through these gifts, since God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are perfectly one with one another in the Divine Trinity.

This is what I call push-the-envelope kind of activity with the Lord. With every single one of these gifts being direct, miraculous, manifestations from the Holy Spirit, you are attempting to tread into deeper waters with the Lord. And that is exactly what God is asking all of us to do with these Spiritual Gifts.

All Spiritual Gifts are to be used on Earth and the gifts are not greater than the giver (Holy Spirit). All Spiritual Gifts are used to magnify the name of Jesus our Lord and Savior. All Spiritual Gifts may be different with each believer. We need to Trust and Obey the Holy Spirit.

Mike